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Translation

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT/FR2003/001750



PCT

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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/FR2003/001750	International filing date (day/month/year) 11 juin 2003 (11.06.2003)	Priority date (day/month/year) 04 juillet 2002 (04.07.2002)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC B23K 9/02		
Applicant TECHNIP FRANCE		

- This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
- This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.
☐ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of _____ sheets.

- This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 12 janvier 2004 (12.01.2004)	Date of completion of this report 29 April 2004 (29.04.2004)
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/EP	Authorized officer
Facsimile No.	Telephone No.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.
PCT/FR2003/001750

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

- ☐ the international application as originally filed
- ☒ the description:
 pages _____ 1-10 _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____
- ☒ the claims:
 pages _____ 1-12 _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, as amended (together with any statement under Article 19
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____
- ☒ the drawings:
 pages _____ 1/7-7/7 _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____
- ☐ the sequence listing part of the description:
 pages _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item. These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language _____ which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages _____
- ☐ the claims, Nos. _____
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/fig _____

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rule 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**1. Statement**

Novelty (N)	Claims	1-13	YES
	Claims		NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	1-13	YES
	Claims		NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1-13	YES
	Claims		NO

2. Citations and explanations

1. The following documents cited in the search report are mentioned in the present report; the numbering given below will be used throughout the rest of the procedure:

D1: FR 2 719 611 (TECHNIP GEOPRODUCTION)
10 November 1995 (1995-10-11);

2. Closest prior art: D1

D1 relates to a method for producing supporting leg rib sections for an offshore platform, wherein the rib includes a main plate (12), which is provided with teeth (14) forming a rack along one longitudinal edge thereof and a semi-cylindrical stiffener (11) welded along the two longitudinal edges of a main surface thereof, and wherein said stiffener (11) and said plate (12) define a channel, said method being characterised in that:

- each longitudinal edge of said stiffener is machined so as to form an outer chamfer (17) on

the opposite side to said channel;

- said stiffener (13) is positioned on each main surface (12a, 12b) of said plate (12),
- then heat-welded thereto at said chamfer (17).

Claim 1 differs from D1 in that:

- a lip is machined to allow said stiffener (11) to engage said main plate (12), by forming an outer chamfer along the longitudinal edge on the opposite side to the channel, and
- a weld bead is formed by adding material from outside said channel.

3. Problem

It follows that the problems addressed are those of ensuring a more reliable engagement of the stiffener on the main plate prior to and throughout the welding operation, and enhancing weld strength by adding material during said welding operation.

4. Solution

The solution involves the following technical features mentioned in claim 1:

- a lip is provided along the longitudinal edge for stiffener engagement with said main surface, by forming an outer chamfer along the longitudinal edge on the opposite side to the channel, and
- a weld bead is formed by adding material.

5. Claims 2-13 are dependent on claim 1 and therefore also fulfil, as such, the PCT requirements of

novelty and inventive step.

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